

Message Text

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APPROVED BY EA:PCHABIB

S/S:MR. ORTIZ

P: FGWISNER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 092501

STADIS//////////

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OTRA, AS

SUBJECT: CORAL SEA VISITOR

REF: CANBERRA 1768

1. COMMERCE SECRETARY ELLIOT RICHARDSON WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT INVITATION OF AUSTRALIAN GOVT TO BE US REPRESENTATIVE TO AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN WEEK (CORAL SEA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION). UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS SISCO ALSO IS UNABLE TO ACCEPT.
2. FYI. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO SOUND OUT AVAILABILITY OF GOVERNOR O'CALLAGHAN, AS FACT THAT SECRETARY RICHARDSON UNAVAILABLE WAS ONLY MADE DEFINITE TODAY. WE DO NOT BELIEVE CHANCES OF HIS ACCEPTANCE OR APPOINTMENT ARE GOOD.
3. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY AT HIGHEST LEVEL INFORMS US THEY ARE NOT KEEN ON IDEA OF ADMIRAL NOEL GAYLER REPRESENTING US AT EVENT. VISIT OF CINCPAC WOULD RAISE OLD OBJECTIONS TO HAVING AN ACTIVE MILITARY MAN REPRESENT U.S. IN EVENT WHOSE MILITARY ASPECT WE HAVE SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY TO AVOID OFFENDING JAPANESE. BESIDES, AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY
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FEARS CINCPAC WOULD BE LIGHTNING ROD THAT WOULD FURTHER

SPUR ANTI-US DEMONSTRATIONS RELATED TO NPW'S, OMEGA AND THE LIKE.

4. WE BELIEVE THAT TIME HAS COME TO PHASE OUT CELEBRATION OF WHAT USED TO BE THE CORAL SEA ANNIVERSARY, FOR THIS YEAR AT LEAST. IN RECENT WEEKS PROMINENT AMERICAN VISITORS TO AUSTRALIA HAVE INCLUDED ARTHUR GOLDBERG, JAMES MICHENER, MRS. KISSINGER, THE VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE EARL BUTZ. THE GOA KNOWS THAT SECRETARY KISSINGER WILL ATTEND THE ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING AT CANBERRA IN AUGUST. WE BELIEVE, AND HAVE REASON TO THINK THAT THE GOA SHARES THIS VIEW, THAT A CORAL SEA REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE US WOULD BE ANTICLIMATIC. IN ADDITION, A SHORT TWO WEEKS REMAINS IN WHICH TO MAKE ALL THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS SHOULD A VISITOR BE DESIGNATED.

5. YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO APPROACH THE DFA AT THE HIGHEST APPROPRIATE LEVEL, INFORMING IT THAT NEITHER RICHARDSON NOR SISCO WILL BE ABLE TO REPRESENT THE US AT THE CORAL SEA CELEBRATIONS. YOU SHOULD INFORM IT THAT GOVERNOR O'CALLAGHAN HAS NOT BEEN APPROACHED, BUT THAT IN VIEW SHORTNESS TIME AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER HE, OR ANOTHER CANDIDATE GOA MIGHT WISH TO PROPOSE, WOULD BE IN POSITION TO BE AT CELEBRATIONS. YOU SHOULD SEEK TO CONFIRM THAT GOA WOULD BE WILLING TO FOREGO VISITOR THIS YEAR IN LINE WITH PARA 4 ABOVE.

6. IF GOA AGREEABLE TO DROPPING IDEA OF CORAL SEA VISITOR THIS YEAR, WE BELIEVE BOTH GOA AND EMBASSY SHOULD EXPLAIN TO AUSTRALIAN-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION THAT, WHILE INVITATION MUCH APPRECIATED, A FURTHER TOP-LEVEL US VISITOR TO AUSTRALIA AT THIS TIME WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO ARRANGE AND MIGHT WELL BE AN ANTICLIMAX. ROBINSON

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